
CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

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Several points can be inferred from the preceding discussion. First, the economic dimensions of national security are complex, interrelated, and widely ramified. In the policy arena, these complexities and ramifications result in responsibilities that are shared, overlapping, and sometimes ambiguous among government agencies.

Second, it is difficult to define precisely the meaning of "economic security," or its cognate, the "economic dimensions of national security." Still, a useful framework for this purpose is to distinguish between the national-security effects of economic policies, and the economic effects of national-security policies: The former include, for example, the rate and stability of U.S. economic growth; the latter include the potential spin-offs from dual-use technology, as well as the use of economic power for national-security ends.

Third, while the economic dimensions of national security have acquired increased interest and emphasis in the post-Cold War era, as well as the particular attention of the Clinton administration, these dimensions are generic: They pervade the meaning and interpretation of national security, whether one is referring to the Cold War or to the post-Cold War period, to the Clinton administration, or to prior or successor ones. The differences relate to the emphasis and priority accorded to these dimensions, rather than to acknowledgment of their relevance to national security.

Fourth, the roles of different agencies of government and different policy levers that are relevant for considering the economic dimensions of national security vary widely, depending on which particular dimensions one focuses on. To the extent that the focus is on na-

tional-security dimensions of economic policy—including the expanded meaning of “economic security,” the relevance of stability and predictability in the international economic and financial environment, the putative importance of key industries and sectors, and so on—the key levers of these aspects of economic security reside in agencies other than the DoD, the National Security Council, and the intelligence community. To the extent that one focuses instead on the economic dimensions of national security policy, the relevant policy levers are ones over which the DoD has greater influence.

Fifth, for the coordinated and synergistic use of economic instruments, on the one hand, and military instruments, on the other, in effective planning and execution of economic security, joint efforts by the DoD and the agencies that are principally responsible for economic policy in the government are essential.

Finally, notwithstanding the importance of giving greater attention to economic security and its instruments in the post-Cold War era, there may be a tendency to discount prematurely and too heavily the classic military instruments whose role has been central in the “old thinking” of the prior era. The international environment of the new era will be characterized by uncertainty, unpredictability, and instability. Many and probably most of the instabilities will warrant a response of neglect—benign or otherwise—from the United States either because of limitations on our power to bring about predictable improvement and relief or on grounds of limited national interests in trying to do so. But, as events as different from one another as Desert Storm, Somalia, and Bosnia suggest, some instabilities may warrant the application of either or both military and economic instruments, by the United States acting alone or, more likely and more frequently, acting in coalition with others. Choosing how and when to respond in such circumstances will entail an enhanced capacity for resilience and flexibility in the design and deployment of both economic and military instruments.

Appendix

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